

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 5713

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINT, SP

SUBJ: DETENTION OF SPANISH MILITARY OFFICERS

1. WHILE THE GREATEST SECRECY CONTINUES TO SURROUND THE INVESTIGATION OF THE DETAINED SPANISH OFFICERS, THE INDEPENDENT DAILY "YA" OF AUGUST 15 DID PRINT A STORY RELATING THAT NINE OFFICERS (THE DETENTION OF THE TENTH OFFICER IS NOT YET IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN) HAVE NOW APPOINTED MILITARY DEFENSE ATTORNEYS, INCLUDING A COUPLE AT THE LT.COL. OR COLONEL RANK.

2. THE FIRST OF THE FAMILIES TO TALK FOR PUBLICATION IS THAT OF MAJOR LUIS OTERO, WHOSE WIFE HAS DETAILED FOR A SPANISH NEWS MAGAZINE (QTE POSIBLE UNQTE) THE EARLY MORNING ARREST OF HER HUSBAND, ACCOMPANIED BY A DETAILED SEARCH OF HER HOME. SHE STATES SHE WAS REASSURED HER HUSBAND WOULD NOT BE MISTREATED, AND MAKES NO REPEAT NO CHARGE OF MISTREATMENT.

3. A SENIOR MFA OFFICIAL WELL KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY TALKED TO THE DEFENSE ATTORNEY OF CAPTAIN RESTITUTO VALERO ON AUGUST 14, BUT APPARENTLY LEARNED NOTHING NEW ABOUT THE CASE. THE SOURCE DID SAY THAT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE VALERO'S POLITICAL ACTIVITY HAD CONSISTED LARGELY OF MEMBERSHIP IN A FLEDGLING POLITICAL DISCUSSION
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GROUP CALLED THE QTE CLUB DE 1980 UNQTE WHICH

IS A QTE CULTURAL UNQTE SOCIETY. THIS CLUB,
FAR FROM BEING SUBVERSIVE, IS RUN OPENLY BY OUR
SOURCE AS A SIDELINE.

4. THE MFA OFFICIAL CHARACTERIZES VALERO, TOGETHER
WITH 14 OTHER YOUNGER OFFICERS HE SAYS BELONG TO HIS GROUP,
AS THOROUGHLY DEMOCRATIC AND SUPPORTIVE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL
SUCCESSION. HE TAKES THE LINE THAT THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF
OFFICERS WITH SIMILAR VIEWS AND SAYS THE ARRESTS CONSTITUTE
A MAJOR BLUNDER IN THAT THEY SERVE ONLY TO POLITICIZE
FURTHER THE YOUNGER OFFICERS.

5. WE REPORT THESE COMMENTS FOR THEIR CONTRAST
TO THE LINE TAKEN BY SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS.
BUT OUR MFA SOURCE, IS A POLITICAL DILETTANTE AND NOT
PARTICULARLY ASTUTE IN THESE MATTERS. WHAT HE SAYS SHEDS
LITTLE LIGHT ON THE EXTENT AND NATURE OF VALERO'S AND THE OTHER
DETAINED OFFICERS' CONTACTS AND ACTIVITIES.

6. A NUMBER OF THESE FUTURE ORIENTED GROUPS HAVE
SPRUNG UP IN THE WAKE OF SPAIN'S MODEST POLITICAL
LIBERALIZATION. THEY SERVE AS THINLY VEILED DEVICES - THUS FAR
TOLERATED BY THE REGIME - FOR DISCUSSING WHAT TO DO AFTER
FRANCO. WHAT IS IMMEDIATELY INTERESTING ABOUT OUR SOURCE'S GROUP
IS THAT OUT OF A MEMBERSHIP OF ABOUT 130, HIS GROUP CONSIDERS
15 MILITARY OFFICERS TO BE MEMBERS.
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